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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[13 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Women, Development and Preventive Factors

Achieving gender and development objectives is in no way an easy task, and requires awareness of the role of human community, both men and women, in the social, political and economic life arenas.

Unfortunately development has never been a justice oriented movement, because in many aspects women have been left behind, particularly in the Third World or developing countries. Even thought the United Nations had named the 1960-70, the Decade of Development, but from the beginning of the 1980s deplorable statistics were released in the Third World countries regarding the situation of women. The following statistics were released by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation in 1991:

- 67% of the working hours of the world belongs to women.

- 10% of the world income is made by women.

- Two thirds of the illiterates of the world are women.

- 1% of the properties of the world belongs to women

Women make up a third of the official workforce of the world. But for the work that they do they get the lowest wages which is around three quarters of what men get.

Women are more vulnerable towards unemployment than men. Women produce half of the food products of the world, but are rarely landowners. The illiteracy rate of women against men remains three to two, and the education gap between boys and girls remains wide according to statistics.

The lack of accurate information on women's conditions has resulted in the fact that the number of women workers in various sectors and women members of workers unions not to be clear. The figures for 2013 in developing and Third World countries have not changed noticeably. This indicates that in the third millennium women are still being oppressed.

We know very well that the role of women in development is directly dependent on the social-economic development objectives of the country they live in, and thus it is deemed as a fundamental factor in the development of societies. Development means a change in all aspects which covers all aspects of society (political, economic, social and cultural). Development causes growth in the economy, social investments, material and resources and even the culture of a society and changes social behaviour in order to express a society's increasing demands and achieve its humanistic objectives.

Planning and implementing development has numerous and complex stages and must be reliant on systems, tools and information so that it is possible to make the necessary decisions. Of course these systems and tools are defined from the social views of powerful groups who are able to affect development and allocation of resources and facilities.

Over the last few decades efforts have been made for women to exercise their rights and actively participate in political, economic, social and cultural issues. And each country with consideration of cultural and institutionalised customs and traditions can enter the social participations arena.

In an age where women's studies philosophers believe that the 20th Century is a battlefield of the power of thoughts and awakening of synergy conscience we need to try together to reach perfection. It is amazing that some societies on various pretexts and the distortion of mankind's schools and religious, historic and cultural demands, have made a mistake and have neglected the creative powers of half of their societies.

One instance is the statistics that indicate the failure to use the huge women's force in managerial levels. And because of this the situation of women's management in Iran and the world was analytically and statistically compared and studied. This important challenge shows the cultural backwardness due to the generalization and spread of unfair differences between men and women in the work arena leads to negative consequences and causes mental and professional capacities and managerial potentials of women not to be utilized in the best way. Thus developing countries end up with further loss. Some women have outstanding managerial capabilities, but, we know very well that women's entrance to higher organizational levels bring along many problems with them. Even though the number of women in the workforce is on the increase, their promotion to managerial levels has not been felt. In conducted researches, for the understanding of men's superiority in management there is no set distinctions to indicate management is exclusive for men. Researches show that tomorrow's management needs further use of the potential power in management. Alongside changes, management difficulties and complex issues for women managers remain.

In the sixties we witnessed the entry and presence of women in management and social spheres in western societies. At the start of this entry the main slogan of ideological movements was equality with men but this slogan too did not bring about satisfactory results for women.

Efforts to establish equality between men and women resulted in the masculine model to be accepted as the model of success, and the acceptance of this model for the evaluation of women resulted in women to be deemed in social circles as individuals with inherent faults, and on the other hand the assumption of being a man resulted in women to place under attack their main life's asset, being a complete woman in other words.

The conclusive result of the aforementioned experience is that fundamental changes are necessary in ideological concepts and the form of the move to exultance.

The question that arises is whether with preservation of all female characteristics it is still possible to be a manager and take the leadership of a group of people that include both men and women?

In follow up to the aforementioned question different materials have been published and the obstacles have been expressed which are listed below:

1 - Prejudgment: conventional interpretation from women is that a woman is an individual that has the ability to be silent, optimist, easily pleased, the result of this presumption is lack of opportunities for women in management.

3 - Lack of homogeneity with the mothering role: Perhaps one of the main problems in the way of women's social management activities that has been debated is their lack of homogeneity with the mothering role.

3 - Inability to have coercive approach: because instinctively women search for a shelter when faced with dangerous issues and evade facing danger, therefore women cannot be good managers.

4 – Characteristic view: this means that particular behaviours that are conducted by women are not coordinated with top management of an organization, therefore they cannot advance.

5 – Socialisation process: this process drives women to professional jobs and not management.

Recommendations and solutions:

1 – Learning political skills and competition skills and the use of scientific consultants in the organization by women.

2 – Nurturing personal skills alongside the development of mental and scientific capacities and creation of trust to their role and job.

3 – Development of the education system for the growth of talents and promotion and strengthening of women's mental independence and their effectiveness as decision makers and responsible people.

4 – Avoid the presence of women in political, cultural and social arenas from becoming a formality.

5 – Selection and appointment of managers and entrepreneurs on the bases of their abilities and not their gender.

Overall the views that prevent women from getting managerial posts, indicates that although the number of women in the workforce has increased over the years, but this advancement in no way is an increase in top organizational and management levels.

The assessment tools for the equality of people in the world is not balanced and despite the burden of responsibility that women have, they never achieve what they deserve. Perhaps women are inheritors of a kind of historic injustice and as a result they are held back from their instincts and creative power which they have in social and cultural development. Fortunately, in Iran there are over 100 women's NGOs, and they have reached positive situations in the path of women's advancements and development, and have reached legislative and executive stages in many areas.

We hope that this new trend in Iran gradually grows and speeds up with a self made and self regulating method and guarantee its continued advances and stability.